

Seattle Permits

— part of a multi-departmental City of Seattle series on getting a permit

Guidelines for Affixing Ornamental Lighting

General

Persons, corporations, or associations are allowed to temporarily attach electrical wires, lights or any other devices for the purpose of holding ornamental lights to any tree(s) growing within the public right-of-way area, provided the following conditions are met.

Attachment

In general, lighting should be affixed to trees no sooner than November 1, and be removed before February 1, to avoid injury to developing leaf buds. Consideration may be given to extending the removal deadline, but it must be approved by the City Arborist's office. All lighting fixtures, electrical wiring, and other electrical devices must be UL approved, and applicants must meet all City Light and Traffic Engineering Safety regulations.

Under no circumstances should light fixtures, electrical wires, or other devices be attached to tree trunks, branches, or limbs with wire, duct tape, or masking tape. Plastic connectors, florist tape, or other flexible tapes may be used to temporarily affix light fixtures or electrical wiring to the tree trunk, branches, or limbs of a tree. Keep all attachments loose around the units or trunk area to reduce chances of girdling the trunk or tree limbs.

Under no circumstances will pruning of branches be permitted to accommodate the installation and/or the removal of electrical wires or lights. In the case of City-owned trees, any tree trunk, branches or limbs found cut, pruned or damaged resulting from this activity will be assessed for damages. The City shall be compensated the lost value of the trees based on the "Council of Tree and Landscapers Guide for Plant Appraisal – current edition" (3rd paragraph

under "Attachment". If electrical lights, wires, connectors or other devices are found on City-owned tree(s) after the expiration date, they may be removed and discarded by the City without notice and the deposit may be forfeited.

Fees

All applicants will be required to post a \$450.00 deposit along with a permit fee in the amount of \$135.00 plus a \$30.00 mapping fee at the time of application. The \$450.00 deposit will be refunded in full provided no damage to tree trunk, branches or limbs is found at the time of release of deposit, and provided that all lights, electrical wires, attachments and other devices are removed before February 1. Business Improvement Areas, Chambers of Commerce and other commercial groups may obtain a single permit for use by all their members as long as they are willing to provide each participant the information on how to appropriately install the lights.

Failure to comply with any, or all of the noted guidelines may be grounds for forfeiture of the full deposit.

For more information, contact John Petersen in the City Arborist's office, at 684-5047.

www.seattle.gov/transportation



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